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I thought you would be interested in this information below. Please feel free to pass on to other interested parties.
Best, Olivia



**Embassy of the Bolivarian
Republic of Venezuela**

Washington, DC • U.S.A.

**Ministry of People's Power
for Foreign Affairs**

Venezuelan Embassy rejects claims by British institute linking Venezuela to the Colombian internal conflict

The Venezuelan Embassy in London today expressed its concern that a report by the British International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) linking Venezuela to the Colombian internal conflict "looks like a dodgy Latin America dossier".

The embassy pointed out that there are basic inaccuracies in the pre-publicity and the report, *The FARC Files: Venezuela, Ecuador and the Secret Archive of 'Raúl Reyes'*, which was released on Tuesday, May 10.

It also called for responsible reporting given that the Colombian Supreme Court has dismissed the "evidence" coming from the computers as inadmissible in prosecution cases against Colombian politicians. [i]

The embassy expressed its surprise and concern at the IISS' decision to use documents whose handling by the Colombian authorities has been said by the international police organization Interpol to "not conform to internationally recognised principles for the ordinary handling of electronic evidence by law enforcement". [ii]

Yet despite these strong statements in Interpol's report on the computers, the IISS just states in its pre-publicity for the launch of the report that:

The Colombian government subsequently obtained confirmation from the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) that the archive had not been manipulated following its capture and exploited the operational leads that it provided over the following months.

Given these flaws, the embassy said that this brings into question the quality of the rest of the report.

This is just one of the factors that cast serious doubt on the authenticity and validity of the information from the laptops that has been presented in the IISS "FARC Files" dossier. As well as raising concerns with the failure to adhere to international practices, Interpol has also stated that it cannot verify the "accuracy of the user files," nor can it prove that the files were not tampered with during the week that it took the Colombian authorities to hand the computers over to Interpol. [iii]

The embassy said that the international community should not accept as valid the use of unverified files by the British institute.

It has also warned that this could become part of an aggressive propaganda tool against Venezuela to undermine progress in the region, precisely at a time when relations between Venezuela and Colombia have reached a level of stable cooperation and friendly dialogue.

Press Unit of the Venezuelan Embassy in London / Press Office – Venezuelan Embassy to the U.S. / May 10, 2011

[i] <http://www.colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/12165-raul-reyes-computers.html>

[ii] www.interpol.int/Public/ICPO/PressReleases/PR2008/pdfPR200817/ipPublicReportNoCoverEN.pdf.

[iii] <http://www.interpol.int/Public/ICPO/PressReleases/PR2008/pdfPR200817/ipPublicReportNoCoverEN.pdf>

Embajada de Venezuela rechaza señalamientos de instituto británico que intentan vincular a Venezuela con el conflicto interno de Colombia

Califica los señalamientos del instituto británico como "dodgy dossier latinoamericano"

La Embajada de Venezuela en Londres expresó el día de hoy su preocupación con relación a un informe del Instituto Internacional de Estudios Estratégicos (IISS, por sus siglas en inglés), con base en Londres, que intenta vincular a Venezuela con el conflicto interno de Colombia, a la vez que calificó dicho informe de parecer un "dodgy dossier latinoamericano".

La embajada señaló que existen inexactitudes básicas en la pre publicidad y el propio informe, titulado *The FARC Files: Venezuela, Ecuador and the Secret Archive of Raúl Reyes* (Los Archivos de las FARC: Venezuela, Ecuador y el Archivo Secreto de Raúl Reyes), el cual fue lanzado al público el martes 10 de mayo.

Asimismo la embajada hizo un llamado para que se reporte de manera responsable cualquier información que emane del informe del IISS, ya que incluso la Corte Suprema de Justicia de Colombia desestimó como inadmisibles cualquier "evidencia" que viniese de dichas computadoras en los procesos judiciales a los que fuesen sometidos políticos colombianos. [i]

La embajada manifestó su extrañeza y preocupación con relación a la decisión del IISS de utilizar documentos cuyo manejo por parte de las autoridades colombianas ha sido descrito como "en discrepancia con principios internacionalmente reconocidos para el manejo ordinario de evidencia electrónica por parte de las agencias del orden público", de acuerdo a la organización policial internacional, Interpol. [ii]

Sin embargo, a pesar del pronunciamiento inminente de la Interpol, a través de su informe sobre las computadoras, el IISS señaló en la publicidad previa al lanzamiento del informe, lo siguiente:

El Gobierno colombiano posteriormente obtuvo confirmación de parte de la Organización Internacional de Policía Criminal (Interpol) que el archivo no había sido manipulado luego de su captura, por lo cual el Gobierno colombiano procedió en los meses subsiguientes a sacar provecho de las pistas operacionales que aparecían en dicho archivo.

Tomando en cuenta estas inconsistencias, la Embajada manifestó que la calidad del informe del IISS es cuestionable.

Este es apenas uno de los factores que arroja serias dudas acerca de la autenticidad y validez de la información emanada de los computadores, la cual fue presentada en el dossier del IISS. Además de los señalamientos ya indicados por parte de Interpol en cuanto a la falta de apego a las prácticas internacionales, la Interpol también ha manifestado que no puede verificar la "exactitud de los archivos del usuario", así como tampoco puede probar que los archivos no fueron manipulados durante la semana que le tomó a las autoridades colombianas entregarle las computadoras. [iii]

La embajada afirma que la comunidad internacional no debería aceptar como válido el uso de archivos no verificados por parte del instituto británico. Asimismo, advierte que el informe del IISS pudiera formar parte de una operación de propaganda agresiva en contra de Venezuela, cuyo propósito no es otro que el de estropear los procesos positivos que ha venido experimentando la región, y en particular extraña sobremanera que este informe se produzca justo en el momento cuando las relaciones entre Venezuela y Colombia han alcanzado un nivel de estable cooperación y diálogo amistoso.

Unidad de Prensa de la Embajada de Venezuela en Londres / Press Office
Venezuelan Embassy to the US / 10 de mayo de 2011

[i] <http://www.colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/12165-raul-reyes-computers.html>

[ii] www.interpol.int/Public/ICPO/PressReleases/PR2008/pdfPR200817/ipPublicReportNoCoverEN.pdf

[iii] <http://www.interpol.int/Public/ICPO/PressReleases/PR2008/pdfPR200817/ipPublicReportNoCoverEN.pdf>

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Dear friends and colleagues,

Please find below another article of interest today.

Best, Olivia

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/may/10/farc-files-colombia-venezuela>

The Guardian

What the Farc files really reveal

A conservative thinktank's attempt to reheat widely discredited Colombian military claims about Farc is pure black propaganda

- [Greg Grandin](#) and [Miguel Tinker Salas](#)
- [guardian.co.uk](#), Tuesday 10 May 2011 20.30 BST

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/may/10/farc-files-colombia-venezuela/print>

The [release Tuesday](#) of a "dossier" of Farc files, which were supposedly seized by the Colombian government in 2008, is truly a non-event. The report, by the [International Institute for Strategic Studies \(IISS\)](#), appears to be an attempt by hawks in the US and the UK to perpetuate, using "black propaganda", the failed policies of the George W Bush administration, as well as previous administrations of the cold war era, to which they respectively once belonged. All of its conclusions are based on the false premise that the documents that it claims to analyse are entirely trustworthy.

Impartial observers of the events surrounding the supposed capture of computer files from [the Farc](#), and their subsequent revelation in the media, have long ago concluded that the files are highly dubious at best. The Colombian military, which claims to have obtained the documents from computers and flash drives following an illegal bombing raid on a Farc camp inside Ecuador in March 2008, is the only party that can know for sure whether the documents are authentic.

The IISS, and others who want the world to believe in the documents' authenticity, rest much of their case on the supposed verification of the files by Interpol. But what Interpol actually said, in its 2008 report on the documents, was that the Colombian military's treatment of the files ["did not conform to internationally recognised principles for the ordinary handling of electronic evidence by law enforcement"](#). Interpol noted that there was a one-week period between the computer documents' capture by Colombia, and when they were handed over to Interpol, during which time the Colombian authorities actually modified 9,440 files, and deleted 2,905, according to Interpol's detailed forensic report. This "may complicate validating this evidence for purposes of its introduction in a judicial proceeding", [Interpol noted at the time](#).

Following their remarkable initial "discovery" and "capture" (the computers, we were told, survived a bombing raid completely unscathed), the Colombian military made "revelations" that quickly turned out to be false. A photo depicting a high-level Ecuadorian official meeting with the Farc [was revealed to be a fake](#). Even more embarrassing, the Colombian military's claims that files showed the Farc were planning to make a "dirty bomb" [were publicly dismissed by the US government and terrorism experts](#).

The documents' evidence of Venezuelan support for the Farc was so weak that Organisation of American States secretary general José Miguel Insulza told the US House subcommittee on western hemispheric affairs just a month later that there was "no evidence" of such support or collusion.

Even more damning for the Colombian military's case were statements last year by General Douglas Fraser, head of the US Southern Command, in response to questions from Senator John McCain, regarding the alleged Venezuela-Farc connection, and the laptop "revelations": "We have not seen any connections specifically that I can verify that there has been a direct government-to-terrorist connection," Fraser stated, adding, "I am skeptical." (Fraser recanted his testimony the following day, following a meeting with the top state department official for Latin America, Arturo Valenzuela. But Fraser, as the US military's leader for activities in South America, is in a much better position to know.)

But perhaps most telling of all are the current close relations between the governments of Venezuela and Colombia, now that Juan Manuel Santos has taken over from Alvaro Uribe as president of Colombia. If Colombia, indeed, had evidence of Venezuelan support for the Farc, would Santos have so readily warmed to the Chávez administration, quickly boosting trade and political support? Santos, interestingly, is the man who, as Colombia's defence minister, oversaw the raid on the Farc camp.

US policy, during much of the Uribe administration (2002-2010), seemed designed to provoke tension between Colombia and Venezuela. Now, with Santos in office, and Colombia "looking ahead" and even dropping a Uribe era agreement stipulating an increased US military presence in Colombia, promoters of this policy are again hoping to stir up trouble, through the IISS.

The world is being asked to trust the word of former Bush administration intelligence officials and national security advisers – who help to oversee IISS's activities – and their counterparts in the UK, who include former advisers to Blair and Thatcher. The IISS expert chosen to present the dossier's findings this week in Washington, for example, is a former British intelligence officer who conducted intelligence operations in Latin America. Other notable IISS advisory council members include Robert D Blackwill (former deputy national security adviser to George W Bush), Eliot Cohen (formerly secretary of state Condoleezza Rice's senior adviser on strategic issues), Sir David Manning (formerly foreign policy adviser to Tony Blair) and Prince Faisal bin Salman bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia. In other words, some of the same people who deceived the people of the United States and the United Kingdom into invading Iraq now want us to believe their "revelations" about Venezuela, Ecuador and the Farc.

The IISS is full of people who should know a thing or two about "black propaganda" – forged or altered information, the source of which is masked, in order to advance policy objectives. The use of such "black propaganda" is as old as espionage itself, and used routinely by the CIA and MI6. The former CIA officer, Philip Agee, described several such operations in his revelatory memoir, Inside the Company: CIA Diary, published in the 1970s.

If Bush cronies are now using "black propaganda" to smear the Chávez government in an attempt to undermine it, it would not be the first time. The Bush administration supported Chávez's brief overthrow, in April 2002. The use of altered information – film footage that was manipulated to make it appear as though Chávez supporters had gunned down unarmed demonstrators – played a key role in that coup d'etat. Why should anyone take at face value former high-level Bush administration officials' claims about Venezuelan or Ecuadorian connections to the Farc?

Unfortunately, there are many loud voices that continue to see Latin America through a cold war prism, such as the current heads of the US House foreign affairs and western hemisphere committees, as well as various editorial writers at major US media organisations, who will be all too happy to take the IISS spooks and neocons at their word – just as they did in the runup to the invasion of Iraq.

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Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.

Dear friends and colleagues,

Please find below our most recent statement rejecting the imposition of U.S. sanctions on PDVSA.

Best, Olivia



**Embassy of the Bolivarian
Republic of Venezuela**

Washington, DC • U.S.A.

Ministry of People's Power
for Foreign Affairs



Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Ministry of People's Power for Foreign Affairs

Statement

Venezuela Rejects U.S. Sanctions Against PDVSA

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has learned of the decision announced by the Department of State of the United States to impose sanctions against our oil national company, Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), as part of a unilateral law targeting the Islamic Republic of Iran known as CISADA.

The Bolivarian Government expresses its strongest rejection to this decision since it constitutes a hostile action on the fringes of international law that violates the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its revolution have a strong, independent and sovereign oil industry able to operate and permanently fulfill its commitments. Faced with this aggression, Venezuela further ratifies its oil independence and sovereignty.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is undertaking a general assessment of the situation to determine how these sanctions affect the operational capacity of our oil industry and, therefore, the supply of 1.2 million barrels of oil per day to the U.S. Pending this assessment, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reserves itself the most adequate answer to this imperialist aggression.

The revolutionary Government calls on all the Venezuelan people, laborers and especially the oil workers, to stay alert and mobilized in defense of our PDVSA and the sacred sovereignty of the homeland.

Caracas, May 24, 2011



República Bolivariana de Venezuela

Ministerio del Poder Popular para Relaciones Exteriores

Comunicado

Venezuela rechaza sanciones de Estados Unidos a Pdvsa

El Gobierno de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela ha tenido conocimiento de la decisión anunciada por el Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos, de imponer sanciones a nuestra empresa nacional, Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), en el marco de su política unilateral de sanciones a la República Islámica de Irán, conocida como la Ley CISADA.

El Gobierno bolivariano manifiesta su más contundente repudio a esta decisión, por constituir una acción hostil situada al margen del Derecho Internacional, violatoria de los principios enunciados en la Carta de las Naciones Unidas.

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela y su Revolución cuentan con una industria petrolera fuerte, independiente y soberana, con capacidad para operar y cumplir sus compromisos de manera permanente; ante esta agresión, Venezuela ratifica esa independencia y esa soberanía petrolera.

El Gobierno de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela se encuentra haciendo una evaluación general de la situación, para determinar hasta dónde estas sanciones afectan la operatividad de nuestra industria petrolera y por tanto el suministro de 1,2 millones de barriles diarios a los Estados Unidos; en función de esa evaluación, la República Bolivariana de Venezuela se reserva la respuesta más adecuada a esta agresión imperialista.

El Gobierno revolucionario hace un llamado a todo el pueblo Venezolano, a la clase trabajadora, y muy especialmente a los trabajadores petroleros, a mantenerse alertas y movilizados en defensa de nuestra PDVSA y de la sagrada soberanía de la patria.

Caracas, 24 de mayo de 2011

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Dear friends and colleagues,

I thought you would be interested in the recent visit of the president of Venezuela's 5th branch of government, the National Electoral Council, Tibisay Lucena to Washington.

Best, Olivia

<http://venezuela-us.org/2011/10/12/venezuelan-electoral-system-is-solid-inclusive-and-transparent/>

President of Venezuela's National Electoral Council Visits U.S.

Venezuelan Electoral System is Solid, Inclusive and Transparent

Published: 10/12/2011

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The President of the CNE explains advances in the Venezuelan electoral system

The President of the National Electoral Council of Venezuela (CNE), Tibisay Lucena, spoke at a series of meetings in Washington this week about the improvements made to her country's electoral system over the last ten years. Lucena – who was invited to participate in a National Lawyers Guild convention in Philadelphia this Friday – indicated that the CNE is a solid, transparent organism that guarantees the inclusion of all Venezuelans across the political spectrum.

Lucena said: "The Electoral Power has defeated abstention and increased democratic participation thanks to the mechanisms that today guarantee the political participation of all Venezuelans. Electoral participation has grown because the CNE has, among other things, audited the voting machines, the software and hardware used during electoral processes, and even the means

of transmission of the data. Also, the CNE has various control mechanisms to guarantee the transparency of all electoral processes."

Regarding the advances made by the CNE, Lucena said that it has defeated the corruption that existed under previous governments and elevated inclusion due to the solidity of the system and factors such as increased voting stations.

"While in the past there were only 7,000 voting stations, today we have 40,000. [In] communities that never before had access to electoral participation. These advances have made our electoral system the safest in the region," Lucena said.

"The electoral registry closes the gap that existed between those that could vote and those who were excluded," Lucena said, noting that while 20 percent were excluded under prior governments, "We have been closing the gap so that it is now only 5 percent."

The CNE president indicated that the caliber of the Venezuelan electoral system has been recognized by multilateral organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS), and that countries such as India have signed conventions with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to strengthen electoral mechanisms.

Last June, the Venezuelan electoral system was certified as the best in the world in terms of compliance with democratic norms and social equality, according to a study by the Canada-based institution known as the Foundation for Democratic Advancement (FDA).

***To view the photo slide show click here and go to the bottom of this page.** <http://venezuela-us.org/2011/10/12/venezuelan-electoral-system-is-solid-inclusive-and-transparent/>

Press – Embassy of Venezuela to the U.S. / October 12, 2011

Photo: Néstor Sánchez-CorderoOlivia Burlingame Gombri

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